LINCOLN,

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

SAINT LOUIS, MO.
1865.

Fish 887

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PENN YAN, N. Y.,

SABBATH MORNING, April 16th, 1865,

ON THE DEATH OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

BY THE PASTOR

REV. FREDERICK STARR, JR.

REPEATED BY REQUEST IN THE

NORTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, St. Louis, Mo.

SABBATH MORNING, May 14. 1865.

BY THE PASTOR ELECT.

SOLICITED FOR PUBLICATION.

ST. LOUIS:
SHERMAN SPENCER, PRINTER, No. 28 MARKET STREET.
1865.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
The Institute of Museum and Library Services through an Indiana State Library LSTA Grant

http://www.archive.org/details/martyrpresidentd02star

DISCOURSE.

Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.—2 Samuel, iii, 38.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.—Job, i, 21.

Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner.

And the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth?

Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters; as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him.—2 Samuel, iii, 31, 32, 33, 34.

Calamities are frequent! Such dispensations, startling and fearful as they may be to those intimately involved in them, are generally so confined as to locality, so limited in the numbers affected by them, are so transient in their effects, and so wholly isolated from questions of morality and Christianity, that rarely does one occur which can be called, properly, a "national calamity."

They also, either by natural signs, or by the forecast of the human mind, are so far discovered, that in some measure, men are prepared for their coming before the hour, in which the general grief shall smite them; when the billows of public woe shall be lashed to foam, and beat over them with sullen roar, and irresistable force.

The citizens of these United States are to-day in the dust, *agonized, bewildered, stunned* by the national calamity which has smitten them down. Sudden as the crashing thunder, sounding through the clear sky, fearful and deadly as the swift fiery bolt that rends the gnarled oak, it fell upon us. A deed hath been enacted without a parallel in all the annals of earthly history! excepting Him whose resurrection from the dead, millions shall this day celebrate, who came the only begotten of God; who was God, and hence not to be brought into comparison with mere man. Excepting only the God-man our Saviour, there has never been so sad a death! There has never been a time so critical, a nation so potential in its influences upon the world, a cause so allied to holy and pure princi-

ples, a man so prominent, so honored, so loved, so powerful as Abraham Lincoln, who in this hour of peril the *head* of this great nation, the *representative* of *law, government, humanity* and *liberty,* lies in yonder Capitol, *cold* and *stiff in death* by the hand of an assassin ! ! !

Gloom, like a heavy pall of Egyptian darkness, shrouds all the land ! Slowness of speech, sadness of countenance, starting tears, oppressed respiration, a crushed heart, dark forebodings, anxious agonizing prayers, are to-day the common heritage of the American citizen: while every ear shall tingle to the remotest end of earth, as it shall hear of this crime, against God and man ! Such is our calamity; let us then on this occasion enquire,—

I. Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel ?"

There are three things in this world which serve, in an especial manner, to confer greatness upon men.

a. The circumstances which surround men, and the positions which they occupy. The position just robbed of its ornament and occupant, by the murderer's hand is the highest which has ever been filled by man. There have been nations, that have endured, in their national life, centuries longer than our own. There have been nations, whose public domain was far more extended than what we possess; whose population many times exceeded ours; whose despots have ruled with an absolute power of oppression and exaction, of life and death in no measure belonging to the President of this Republic. But it is to be remembered, that no time in earth's history has been seen such an age as this: that within the last half century, in agriculture, in mechanical inventions, in useful discoveries, in advanced education, in means of physical and mental communication over the whole face of the globe, have been made advances, greater than those achieved in thousands of years preceeding. The printing press, before inert and unwieldy, has become almost instinct with living, and energizing intelligence; seeming like a huge giant to seize the reams in whiteness, to cast them forth upon the nations, tens of thousands in an hour, transformed, made wonderful by the simple passage through his hands, and all intense, with the burden of great truths and interests connected with the race. The stationary steam engine, the proud steam-ship, the swift locomotive, are all the productions of this century. The postal system of the world, has taken the place of unreliable and individual carriage. The

telegraph has extended its iron nerves over much of the earth, bringing remotest nations in all commercial and governmental interests, into instant and sympathetic communication. Old forms of government have been utterly discarded, or greatly modified; and the theories and practice of war have changed both on land and sea. And where stand we among the nations? Almost the youngest of all the sisterhood, no nation, in so short a history, in all the past of this world, has so rapidly advanced in population, in domain, in wealth, in power and in influence, as these United States. And he, who now is slain, was the *head* and *front* of this great people, at the moment of its greatest strength. In the time of its most rapid advancement, he was called to preside over its destinies, and he hath been its ruler, through the hours of its darkest night—through the years of its deepest peril. No leader hath ever led such a nation to battle; hath ever marshaled an army of such intelligence, patriotism and christianity; hath had such a navy to plough the main. There are great crises in the world's affairs; and this bloody war of rebellion, the last which has transpired, probably shall have a wider influence upon the destinies and interests of the entire world, than any four years since time began. Now, when the crisis is passing, they who are the actors and the moving spirits are they who, alone in future history, can stand identified with those great periods, and I hesitate not to say, considering the questions involved, the interests at stake, the terrors of the convulsion through which we have passed, and are still passing, that our loved, noble President hath stood in the highest and most responsible position ever occupied by man. This day he lies in cold and solemn state, while we, as bereaved children, mourn around his bier. "Know ye not that a prince and a great man hath fallen in Israel to-day?"

b. Energy and talent are characteristics which confer greatness upon their possessor. Called to the head of the government at an hour, when no man felt wise enough to devise a way of escape from our dangers—when no man felt strong enough to say, "I can deliver, and my will shall be done"—humbly but patiently he assumed the honors, the duties, the dangers which his nation had *thrust* upon him without his seeking, and asking all to invoke, for him, the guidance and protection of God; disguised as a fugitive, to escape the bloody death which, after four years, has fallen upon him, he entered our capitol alone, and took up the reins of govern-

ment, which cowardly and traitorous hands had dropped into the mire. While millions prognosticated evil—while many charged imbecility, and filled their mouths with revilings and contempt—calmly and carefully he set himself to study the problem of our nation's deliverance and salvation. By no lights of past history guiding his obstructed footsteps, for there were no precedents for this great struggle; but seeking to be led, and gathering every ray of light from every quarter, as, from day to day, they gleamed through the fissures of what seemed to be the crumbling walls of this republic, he pressed on. And he hath left a record of pure devotion, of consummate wisdom, of the most grand and solid statesmanship which the world hath ever seen. Enemies and friends, alike, have been compelled to admire him; foreign nations have been awed into respect; and distant tyrants, on their mighty thrones, have trembled at his words. Little as the murdered Lincoln hath, in the hour of his achievements, received the due acknowledgement of what he was, and of what he hath done, coming generations, and other nations, as from afar they look back upon the men of the past, shall see and own among the rulers or statesmen of the world no greater name than his, and acknowledge him the precious gift of God to this great nation in the hour of her extremity. "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

c. But that which confers the truest and the highest greatness upon man is his character. However elevated the position a man may occupy, either by birth, by his own achievements, or by the choice of those who would honor him, or use him for their ends; there cannot be any greatness which satisfies a noble and intelligent soul, unless it beholds connected therewith worthy principles of action, and pure and elevated aims. When these are certainly present, they impress men with approbation and awe. While, where they are lacking, men are ready to acknowledge and respect the position or official standing—to praise the ability and powers of the individual—while, in their souls, they can only despise and loathe him as proud, selfish, ambitious, and unprincipled. If any man has ever occupied a high position, and through years of difficulty, oppositions, distracted counsels, varying fortunes, impressed all men, friends and foes alike, with his deep patriotism, his unselfish devotion, his earnest desire to do right, to serve his nation, and to please God, that man was Abraham Lincoln. And

when the time of his trial came, when his suffering, bleeding nation, was called upon to say; in the midst of terrific battles, of increasing debt, of onerous taxes, and impending drafts; will you have this man to reign over you still? Like the voice of many waters, came up from all the nation the thankful answer, YES! The great and glorious Washington was re-elected President of the United States in the time of peace. The second Father of his Country, Lincoln, in the time of war. Washington led our nation in a war against a hostile foe, foreign and far removed from our land, when we numbered three millions. Lincoln hath led our nation, through a civil war, with the foe indigenous to the soil, with the nation numbering thirty-three millions, divided in itself and clasped in a *death struggle*. Washington died in *old age*, in *peace*, his work completed, his service ended. Lincoln died in the full *flush* and *prime of life*; his left hand still bearing on high the scroll of the nations liberty and life—the glorious Constitution he had sworn to maintain—his right still waving on, with the nation's sword, our veteran armies to victory over lawlessness, bloodshed, aristocracy, slavery and rebellion. He died a martyr to the pure and holy principles which had controlled his government; and was added to the number of those sons of the republic who have been offered as a sacrifice for her life, and have shed their blood for universal liberty. Oh, Sudden night! Shut down on such a glorious noon! Oh, sad destruction of most blessed hopes! Oh, bloody termination of a career so glorious and high! Oh, nation! in thine hour of triumph and of joy, smitten into the dust? Yet, how could he die better than to seal his truth, his principles, his life, with his own blood? Without a personal stain on all his character, humane, humble, full of truth and honesty and honor, he died. Let stand your nation for a thousand years. Call to the helm of state the wisest and the best. In all the long catalogue of names shall none be found who served his country with a purer aim, who built her honor more, or gave a higher glory to her name and throne!

"Know ye! Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

II. The Lord God Almighty is the dispenser of the blessings or woes of His creatures. If ever any man was brought to a position of honor by the direct hand of God, it seems, to my own mind, to be as clear in the case of the elevation and election of Abraham

Lincoln, as in the triumph of Mordecai. And that God, who prepares men for great events, and qualifies them for the parts they are to act, thus qualified and prepared him, as we have already noticed, for that station which he has so worthily, usefully, and faithfully filled.

But now, darkness has come over us. Is it *dark* with God? Perplexities surround us; is God *discomfited?* We are mourning; does God *grieve?* No. All is light with him. All is serene in Heaven. He sees clearly what shall come to this nation—"His mercy endureth forever." No! this fearful dispensation is but one of the great steps, of His own wise and gracious plans, to bring us to the truth, to justice, to repentance, and the doing of righteousness. We might, perhaps, profitably enquire, *Why hath God taken away the head of the nation?*

a. To punish us for our sins. We are a nation, despite the bruisings and crushings of this war, proud, unhumbled, and impenitent, and God has sent this in punisment of our sins.

b. To compel us to rely on God alone. Men are prone to make idols of those whom they admire; and to lean heavily on those in whom they confide; and ever, in the times of success, to forget God, and give glory to the instrument. He hath taken away *our head!* To whom shall we now flee but unto Him?

c. We have not prayed enough for our President and officers and rulers. Our President, now dead, asked *all* this nation to *pray* for him. Hundreds of thousands have, hundreds of times, lifted up prayer to God for him; but how many, who love their country well, never asked God to give him wisdom, courage, defence, and principle? We have another President to-day; he may, or he may not, like him departed, ask our prayers; but shall he not have them? Shall we not pray that God will deliver us, not alone from the armies of the rebellion, but also from the cups, knives, and pistols of assassins lying in wait for the generals of our armies, and the officers of our nation? Shall we not, as a nation, turn to prayer as never in the past?

d. God had fulfilled the earthly service and mission of Abraham Lincoln. Had God chosen longer to have saved him, had He required further service at his hands, he had not died. God raised him up. He used him efficiently and gloriously, and then took him unto Himself—his service was ended.

And we can further enquire, *What should we do,* as a nation, *under this affliction?*

a. Be thankful unto God for the past. Let not the sorrow of the present rob us of the joy of the past. Let not the loss we now feel, lead us to repining and unthankfulness for the great gift we have had so long in possession. And let us thank God that, while the President died, the Secretary of State was spared; and that Grant, Stanton, and we know not how many others probably aimed at in the conspiracy, escaped unharmed.

b. Be courageous and trustful in God for our country. If it be God's care he will not let it fall—though He may wound, He will heal—though He may cast us down, He will raise us yet again, and crown us with glory. "His arm is not shortened, that it cannot save."

c. Let us remember that God is omniscient. If we knew all things, and were able to look into the hearts of all men, to weigh their abilities and energies with unfailing exactness; to understand fully the exigencies and dangers which are to arise in the future; then we could, from among men, select the one best fitted, by judgment, natural powers, and needful principles, for that especial position. Then we could, with certainty, oppose and control the elements which still would seek the dishonor and destruction of our country. We also would then know what plans to adopt, what policy to introduce, what resources to employ, to save our land, to restore peace, to vindicate the right, so long ruthlessly insulted and trampled in the dust. But omniscience is not ours. It is God's *alone!* And can we not trust all in His hands? He knew the abilities of Lincoln, Grant, Sheridan, Thomas, Farragut and Sherman, long before they were conscious of the first thought, that greatness should ever appertain to themselves. He saw them the defenders of liberty and country, long before their fellow citizens had heard their names or were willing to trust them with the leadership of our State or arms. And cannot He, whose eye sees the future with the certainty with which it beholds the past; who knows every soul, with a deeper knowledge than it can have of itself, choose for us, from among all our people, those who will lead us through the perils and civil dangers to come? If we are a holy nation, walking humbly and prayerfully, doing justly, loving mercy, and executing judgment, because we wish to be God's, then His omniscience will be exercised to lead and bless us—He will make

our path, He will crown our counsels, He will choose our leaders.

III. It is proper to weep for the truly great, the brave and the good.

a. Because a heavy loss is directly sustained in their removal. Men belong not alone to themselves. Their families, the communities where they dwell, the nations of their birth or adoption, have natural and civil claims upon them so strong and just that their fulfillment is virtue, and their neglect is crime. When God raises up any man, who, in character, ability, and achievement, is accomplishing great good, his removal is a sore calamity to the people. So many men, possessed of ability, are wanting in principle. So many, of principle, are wanting in judgment. So many, even in good deeds are actuated by unworthy motives. So many are corrupt and venal, lending their services either to the right or wrong, according to the recompense promised, that the loss of every *true, pure, patriotic, good man* is a *loss* to all about him—yea, to the world. Every such one is needed. When one dies, the eye, watchful for the *general* interest, is closed; the tongue, which spoke for the right, is hushed; that hand, which held back oppression and crime, is powerless; and the generous heart, which embraced all men in its benevolence, is still! Should man weep over personal losses—over private disappointments—over individual bereavements? Then assuredly should he weep when such a living, acting, energizing power, which blessed all about it, dies.

b. It is proper to weep, because death withdraws the example of the good. It is, in one sense, true, that no man can die! The acts which, in life, he performed, will act and re-act through all the future. Every word which he hath spoken, hath influenced and moulded some character, which, in its turn, shall influence others; so that nothing of his life shall be lost, whether it be good or bad. In another sense, a man's life is complete when death takes him away. Of all he hath thought, or said, or done, he can alter nothing. The record is closed—the drama is ended. Thenceforth stands an example, either to be honored and followed, or to be reprobated and shunned. Wherein, then, can it be said, that, by death, one's example is cut off? The bustle of business, the broodings of covetousness, the rush of passions, the necessities of life, so occupy men—engross their time—exhaust their energies, that but few reflect—few read—few remember those who have lived in the past. Even our own dead are almost forgotten. The

examples which men most notice, are those prominently connected with matters of general interest; those mostly discussed among men; those brought most frequently in contact with themselves. When any man dies, just as he surrenders his place to another to discharge the duties and bear the honors which were his, and becomes a man "*who was*," instead of one "*who is*," so his example becomes historic, instead of present. As the remembrance of a man passes away, except as re-called by sights, circumstances, dates and occasions, so his example, instead of being a part of passing events, an ever-present reality, moving and acting among, with, and before millions of his fellows, becomes the cold truthful record of what he was, and of what he did; and the greater the man, the more valuable and impressive his life, the greater the loss sustained in the withdrawment of that example.

c. They are a loss to the beauty and the glory of the nation from which they are taken. Great and distinguished persons are representative men. And where such arise, they are especially the property of the individuals whom they represent; and generally of the country producing them. Men elected to office, are the exponents of the political opinions of their constituents. Great generals and admirals are the culmination of prowess, strategy and courage, and the boast of armies. Great scholars and orators are the pride and idols of all men of letters. Great statesmen and grave judges reflect honor on the law—great surgeons, physicians and inventors, on science. Holy saints honor the church and religion, and glorify Christ Himself. Patriots, pure and devoted, make their country renowned and illustrious. While just, wise and righteous rulers are a *crown of majesty* and *glory* to their nations.

Individuals become distinguished and honored in their communities by their virtues and abilities. Communities rank high in the nation, according to their characters, and the number and influence of great and good men; and nations know scarcely anything of each other, save a few geographical facts, a few great historical facts, and the names of the rulers, and a few great men.

The great and good men are the true diadem of a nation's glory; and every one who dies is a bright jewel plucked from the crown the nation in the present wears, to show what she *now is*, to be set in that other imperishable crown, which tells what she *hath been*.

David, in the hour of his accession to the crown, lamented over the fall of those whose removal gave him advancement. "The

beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places. How are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon! Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew nor rain upon you! Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul! How are the mighty fallen!"

When Abner had fallen by the hand of the assassin Joab, David called on all the nation, as he stood by the bier of that great general, so foully murdered, "Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner! And the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept." When Jesus stood by the grave of his friend Lazarus, He wept; and the Jews said, "Behold how he loved him." And when the heaven-beholding Stephen, the first of the martyrs of Jesus, had been murdered, devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made *great lamentations* over him.

My fellow countrymen! The woe upon you is great. Fast flow your tears! Hang out the signs of grief! Lower your glorious flag! Bow low your heads in anguish! For your *President* upon your throne, hath fallen in his capital by murder; the General of all your armies and navies hath met an ignominious death by the hand of an assassin; your Friend, yea, more, your *Father,* and the Father of your country hath passed away; and he that feared God and wrought righteousness hath been martyred therefor. Yea, weep and rend your garments! Your King, General, Friend, and Christian Leader hath in a moment been cut off! His active, honorable, useful life is closed! His pure and worthy example has become a thing of the past! And the glory, the joy, the beauty of our nation is quenched in darkness.

d. But there is another cause of sorrow, which, as a Christian minister, I cannot, in faithfulness, omit to mention. The cares and duties which have rested on, and weighed down, our late President, during these four years of war, were numerous and crushing to physical health and mental vigor; and only a constitution invigorated and hardened by exposure, hardship and continued physical labor, and preserved by carefulness and great physical exercise; and a mind of extraordinary vivacity, cheerfulness, and elasticity, could have endured them. A body, so wearied as his, seemed to need change of place. A mind so overtaxed, desired, if possible, not only relaxation, but utter forgetfulness, and the substitution of wholly different trains of thought. Crowded in

time, by hundreds of visitors in a day, all coming with business or petitions—feeling the necessity to meet that *favor* always claimed by a people from their rulers—that they would show themselves in public to their citizens—Abraham Lincoln sometimes attended the theatre; and thus sought recreation, rest, and the opportunity to appear before the people without demands for speeches, or personal applications for individual benefits. In this manner, he himself set a personal example before our citizens and the youth of our country, which, if followed by them, would be deleterious in the extreme. He gave his countenance to a class of individuals, who are perhaps beyond any others—while professing respectability, and to be teachers of morality—the most depraved, vicious and unprincipled in society; and gave his influence and presence, to fill the coffers of those who are the most useless members of the whole community, in contributing anything to the well-being, the prosperity, or the property of the nation. It is true that Mr. Lincoln had never made a public profession of religion; and some thence argue that there was no impropriety in his attending the theatre. On the other hand, it has been reported that Mr. Lincoln had privately declared himself as having a hope in Christ. We know, from unquestioned testimony, that in his later years, he was accustomed to go to God in secret prayer; and his messages and speeches all bear an increasing impress down to the last inaugural, the most honorable and most glorious one of all, of his increasing dependence on God, desire of heavenly guidance, and effort to please God. While we make all possible allowances for the early education of Mr. Lincoln, (perhaps without religious influences,) while we remember his need of relaxation, and the duties he considered himself as owing to the populace; when we regard the fact that CHRISTIANS, who should have set him a *better example*, were accustomed to frequent the same place, and it is supposed, to urge his presence; even then we must say we consider the attendance of the President of the United States at the theatre a *sad mistake!* That, had its moral influence and the evil of the example been pointed out to him, that noble, honest, benevolent man would not have yielded to *any urgency*, or invitation to attend that place. He was an *uncompromising temperance man*, for his own sake, and the *benefit of others*. And the same principle, and cheerful obedience of duty, which made him *that*, would, if properly presented, have led him to abjure the theatre. Would

that all our government officers might think of these things, and give their influence upon the side of morality, the public benefit, and right.

From the sad place where the President was assassinated, we learn that we can never approve ourselves, if voluntarily found in those places, where death cannot appropriately find us. No man knows when, or where, or how death may meet him. He should frequent no place, engage in no amusement or business, be found with no companions, which should cause him a blush, or wring his heart with a regret, or leave his friends to mourn that he died there, or so engaged, or with such company.

Again, we cannot too scrupulously inspect the conduct and characters of men with whom we associate—especially strangers. There seems oftentimes, on the part of youth of *both sexes*, to be an idea that it is a desirable thing to be acquainted with persons who have seen much of the world, without enquiring *which part* of it they have seen, or with *what motives*. Those, too, who are conspicuously before the public, no matter in what character, are sought after by the weak. The inexperience of youth is easily flattered by a few words, or a little notice from strangers, whom they suppose to be well posted in matters respecting the manners of society, and the ways of the world; and before men of studied deceit, and ripe experience in crime, principles become corrupted; integrity ceases, and virtue falls. If all our youth would seek for companions who have more of native modesty, and know *less* of the world, it would be a blessing to their persons, souls and estates. The world is full of men and women who have *traveled* too much; have *seen* too much of the world, and *know* too much to be either safe companions, or truly good citizens.

Again, we see *from what class of men* come some of the great crimes of our country. Prodigality, intemperance, and lewdness are generally considered and found to be concomitants of the stage. The whole business of the stage is the practice of hypocrisy. It is one continual assumption of characters, dissimilar each to the other, and from his own who plays. To-day he acts the saint, and to-morrow the villain, with equal earnestness, and with a desire to produce equal impression. His exhibition of virtue is but a simulation; his presentation of vice ofttimes is set forth *con amore*. It was in this school of hypocrisy and vice that he was trained, who hath dared to lay his impious and deadly hand upon the Lord's

anointed. Any place would be dreadful, wherein such a deed of horror had been committed; but the words of Mrs. Lincoln, that "dreadful house," meant more; and they speak that sad regret which is felt by every true patriot, and especially, Christian heart. That we could wish that our noble martyr had met his death in almost any other place than a theatre—by almost any hand rather than that of a depraved actor. This is a drop peculiar in our great cup of grief.

IV. The *sadness* of *untimely death, is modified by* the presence and blessedness of *innocence.* As regards their procuring causes, there are three kinds of death which men die.

a. There is the death of necessity. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." When the time allotted has transpired, by disease, or age and decay, or by accident, the man perishes, there is no immediate cause therefor in any act performed, or moral character possessed by him, he dies in the course of nature.

b. There is the death by folly. A violation of natural laws brings its own penalty, disease, frenzy, suicide! A violation of social laws brings opposition, revenge, murder. A violation of human laws, brings fines, manacles, fetters, imprisonment, and capital execution. And high handed crimes against God and religion, sometimes receive "*the immediate visitation of God,*" as in the case of Booth. It is the fool's death.

c. There is a death by virtue and righteousness. "Died Abner," asked David, "as the fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters! As a *man falleth before* WICKED *men, so fellest thou!* And all the people wept again over him."

Sin is voracious and vindictive. It is the opposite of holiness, it seeks everywhere to displace and to annihilate goodness and righteousness. As sin, in its nature, ever opposes right, so men, imbued with sin, ever hate and oppose those who are good. Think you that sin is gentle and harmless? Look at all the innocent blood that, through the ages, has crimsoned the earth? Look at the holy prophets, and the blessed apostles, and the christian martyrs! Look at Jesus! Sin, in different ages, or men, or lands, develops itself in special forms; and in these last four years, in our nation and country, in *treason and rebellion*! What are the fruits? What hath it done? It has torn from their families thousands who were loyal to their country, and compelled them to murder men who were defending the government and constitution of this broad land.

It hath cast thousands into prisons, to suffer every cruelty, and death itself, because they would not unite in crime against God and this great nation. It hath shot men, by hundreds, in cold blood, in their houses, without the prison walls, on the mountains, because they had this *one virtue*—LOYALTY. It hath burned homes, and driven out to suffering despair, and perishing tens of thousands of innocent women and children; not for any crime, save *they belonged to those who were* LOYAL. It has also seized wounded prisoners, entitled to humanity, and hath bayonetted them, shot them through the head, and cut their throats while dying. It hath cast the dying into the flames, and consumed them; it hath buried the living; it hath crucified men, and burned them by slow fires; it hath taken wounded prisoners, and inflicted upon them unnecessary amputations; and compelled sick soldiers to a diet which has brought speedy death; it hath taken from fifty to eighty thousand men, and subjected them to a slow and unspeakably horrible death by starvation, till near forty thousand men are now in their graves by this murder, and forty thousand more live on, ruined in health, and comfortless; it hath, at last, by dark plotting conspiracy, sought to *cut down the organized government of your nation*, and hath *marred and murdered your President.*

The sin which was determined to stop the President and Cabinet of this nation in the performance of their duty, and was willing and ready to murder them, would assassinate, had it the power, *every lesser loyal personage*, even to the *last*, were it necessary, to gratify this ambition and retain its power and criminal and degrading institutions.

Abraham Lincoln is dead! And he yet lives! and will live, honored, loved, revered, for he died in the path of duty. He died for the principles of right and liberty. He died, because he loved his country and feared God. His name in the future shall stand *first* on the long roll of noble, brave patriotic, and Christian men who have died for their country—who responded to *his* call, in her hour of danger—who gave their blood for her redemption from *slavery* and *crime.*

V. We are called to-day to a new consecration, to God and our Country. No one can too highly regard the enforcement of the laws, or too strongly demand their execution. One crime there is above all others, as regards human government—it is *treason*—by as much as a nation, is greater than a family; by as much as the

State, is more important than the individual; by so much does treason exceed conspiracy against private parties, and war in its behalf surpass mere individual murder. That is the only crime known to the organic law of this great nation. The Constitution defines treason and its punishment. It is simple—it is plain—it is understood by all. More than four years this crime has raged rampant in the land. Until this hour, *I know not that one man hath been executed for* TREASON *against the United States.* While the accursed, diabolical usurper—for four years the tyrant of a fictitious government—hath executed hundreds of brave, true, God-fearing men, for what *he* called treason against his government, but which was simply loyalty to the United States.

December last, five years age, an old man, his head white with years, his intellect disordered by persecution—by the murder of his son, and by too intense sympathy for God's oppressed poor—"with a radiant countenance, and the step of a conqueror," ascended to the platform of a gallows in Virginia. Surrounded by *three thousand* soldiers, with loaded muskets; by *cannon turned upon the scaffold,* and placed to sweep every avenue of approach; while guards were picketed fifteen miles in every direction around Charleston jail, to prevent his escape, or deliverance; the illustrious man—unterrified and triumphant—was executed.

This so-called criminal had levied war against the United States in seizing the national armory at Harper's Ferry, and fighting against its troops; and against Virginia, in invading her territory, seizing her citizens, shooting men, and inciting rebellion among her slaves. The brave old soldier, oft sabred, twice bayonetted, with four wounded companions, was captured by LOYAL *Col. Robert E. Lee and ninety U. S. Marines, aided by the militia of Virginia!* He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to die. Before the court, that man, who knew not how to lie, answered, "I deny everything but what I have all along admitted—the design on my part to free the slaves. That was ALL I intended. I never did intend murder, or TREASON, or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite slaves to rebellion, or to make *insurrection.*" Honest, noble, loyal words! Oh, was there no room for mercy in Virginia's heart? None! Could not the executive of the United States urge clemency for him? No! HE seemed to pant for the offender's blood. Was there no pardon for a poor, insane, old man—the christian philanthropist—who wildly and mistakenly sought to give deliv-

erance and blessing to the oppressed? No. None! Governor Wise replied to his agonized wife, that the duty was very painful to himself; but the highest considerations required him to perform it; that her husband had been guilty of *treason*, and must DIE.

Sadly did I then see the refusal of clemency or pardon! But, a loyal citizen, obedient to the laws, I said, let noble, true, holy John Brown die! He has erred; but his Saviour will receive him, and crown him with everlasting glory. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." But more sadly, through these weary years, have I beheld the long delay of just and legal retribution on those who, deliberately, avowedly, insultingly, plotted against the nation's peace and life, and inaugurated a bloody war; who were moved by a fell ambition; who hated other men because they held Christian sentiments; who were determined to gratify their avarice, tyranny and lust by perpetuating a crime most degrading to man, and most infamous in the sight of God; who called themselves *traitors*, and gloried in the name of rebels; and who, with demoniac fury, and satanic malignity, set themselves to fill the land with theft, flames and murder.

These men have avowed their crime. They have filled the full possible measure of earthly cruelty and iniquity. The monuments of desolation stand on every side. The woe and wailing is universal. The innocent blood, yet wholly unappeased and unatoned, in deep red waves rolls over our country. The murderers, unawed, by hundreds of thousands stalk the land. Tell us, O, Justice! born in Heaven, and given of God to man—thou friend of innocence—defender of the weak—deliverer of the outraged and oppressed—maintainer of the truth—champion of righteousness—avenger of crime! Oh, whither hast thou fled? Why haltest in the execution of thine office? A million bloody daggers hath treason plied with all its power, on the fair neck of liberty, and yet SHE *lives—revives*—stands up again in beauty, purity and strength—preserved of God! O, Justice! Atlas of all government in earth or heaven, why shouldst THOU perish NOW? Who thus has smitten thee? Tell us, ere thou shalt utterly expire! have all thine ordained instruments, thy sworn allies, *the Church, the Court, the Rulers*, who bear the sword of God—have ALL THESE conspired to be thine own assassinators?

What, Fellow Countrymen, is your duty and mine? Is it not, to call on those whom God has appointed for the administration

of law, and the preservation of government, to do *their* duty, regardlesss alike of fear or favor; to put away *all* mawkish pity, *all* political expediency, and do right *fully*, in the sight of God, who hath punished us so bitterly for our sins; and who, if we permit the wicked to go unpunished, will Himself punish us further *therefor*.

And ought we not, remembering, our own weakness, and our need of pardon, to bow before God, and implore Him to guide our rulers *in every act*—that they may *permanently* compose our national distractions—heal *soundly* our nation's wounds, and save, *untarnished*, our nation's honor? Let us pray Him to keep us from so demoralizing ourselves—so outraging consistency—so courting unending infamy—so falsifying facts—so enacting a stupendous lie—*as, by our national acts*, to make our national history declare in the face of the universe and of eternity, that, in all the period, of our national existenee thus far, there has been but *one ruler* able to perceive the enormity of disloyalty and rebellion—Henry A. Wise; but *one citizen* base enough to be a Traitor, and worthy to die for Treason—the Christian Martyr, John Brown!!!

71.2009.084.05232